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ABSTRACT

A random sample of 600 telephone subscribers was surveyed to determine Arkansas citizen attitude on higher education. Sections of this report present general findings on public attitudes, attitudes on higher education, and demographic and geographic variations in response. Findings reveal that Arkansans seemed convinced generally that colleges and universities in the state are doing a good job. The need for more money; problems with drugs, morals, sex, and alcohol; and the existence of poor or unqualified teachers were listed (in descending order) as the greatest problems facing colleges today. Respondents felt that universities should be involved in providing practical experience to students, educating those over 21 who had not been to college, engaging in practical research, and providing remedial education. Other findings showed that 90 percent of the respondents wanted more career emphasis in the college curriculum. Residents seemed to feel that college is a necessity and should be available to every high school graduate in the state. Many respondents, especially Blacks and women, felt that current tuition levels were too high. The majority of respondents indicated they were willing to pay higher taxes in order to improve the quality of the system and expand opportunity. The survey instrument is appended. (Author/PHR)

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Arkansas Attitudes on Higher Education

Results of a Survey of Arkansas Citizens

University of Arkansas at Little Rock
Center for Urban and Governmental Affairs

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University of Arkansas at Little Rock
Monograph Series

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Introduction

Citizen attitudes form the backdrop against which much public policy is made. Yet in many instances, only intuitive perceptions of public opinion on policy are available. This study grew out of our desire to have a better grasp of the way Arkansans feel about higher education within the state.

In order to bring objectivity to an assessment of these attitudes, we developed and conducted a survey designed, first, to determine the attitudes of a cross section of citizens throughout the state on general public policy issues, and then, to examine in detail attitudes on education and more particularly on higher education. The survey instrument was a structured two-page questionnaire, attached as the Appendix to this report. As examination will show, the questionnaire is a mixture of open-ended and multiple choice questions.

A random sample of 600 telephone subscribers was selected from the universe of the most current telephone directories for each county. (A sample size of 600 produces a sampling error of 4 percent at a 95 percent confidence level.) Interviewers were given a quota of respondents from each county based on that county's proportion of the state population.

By a specific selection procedure, interviewers maintained a representative mixture of respondents with respect to the age and sex of those present in each household at the time of the call. This process increased the likelihood that the household members chosen as respondents would closely approximate the characteristics of Arkansas' adult population as a whole. Had interviewers simply used as respondents those family members who happened to answer the phone, respondents as a whole would probably have been less representative.

The telephone calls were made between 5:30 and 9:30 a.m. weekdays, 10 a.m. and 9 p.m. Saturdays, and 2 and 9 p.m. Sundays, during the period May 12 through May 28, 1978.

Because of the county quota selection method, the respondents duplicate almost exactly the population of the state in geographical distribution. Individuals from all seventy-five counties are represented in proportion to their population in the state, and Arkansas' four congressional districts are almost equally represented in the sample: First District, 153; Second District, 149; Third District, 149; and Fourth District, 149. The respondents also duplicate closely the

black-white ratio of the state population, with only a 1 percent bias in favor of whites. The total of the respondents has 8 percent more women than the state population, according to 1970 census estimates. There is also a higher proportion of respondents with at least some college education than in the state population. These last two variations are probably attributable to the higher likelihood that better-educated persons have telephones and that women, more often than men, are at home during the interviewing hours. None of the biases significantly alters the results of any question.

TABLE 1

CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY AND 1970 CENSUS DATA

		Survey May 1978	State Population 1970 (Men 20 and Over)
Sex	Male	56%	47%
	Female	44%	53%
Race	White	86%	85%
	Black	14%	15%
Education	Less than H.S. graduate	36%	52%
	H.S. graduate	28%	18%
	Some college	23%	15%
	B.A. or more	13%	10%

To provide a frame of reference, our report begins by presenting responses to general questions on state problems and on recommended divisions of state monies. The report then considers revealed attitudes on educational needs and concentrates specifically on public responses to the series of questions on higher education in the state. For most responses, there was not a significant difference when they were analyzed according to the respondents race, sex, geographical area of the state, education, or age. For those questions where there were significant differences, results are reported in a separate section preceding the summary.

1

General Findings

Economic problems and dishonesty in government seem to dominate the thinking of those Arkansans asked to identify the greatest problems facing state government today. Of those responding to a question on the major problems facing state government, 26 percent mentioned inflation and high prices; 7 percent mentioned the economy; 12 percent mentioned dishonesty and corruption; and 11 percent cited distrust of politicians and government. Eleven percent cited high taxes as a problem, but 7 percent said lack of funds was the greatest problem facing state government. It is interesting to note that in this election year, with many issues before the public, almost half of the respondents (47 percent) could not think of any problem facing state government.

Arkansans seem somewhat less concerned about economic problems than do Americans as a whole, as can be seen by comparing the results of a national survey taken about the same time.

Table 2

Problems Facing State and National Government

	Arkansas/Mar 79 Problems in State	US Gallup/Mar 79 Problems in Nation
High cost of living, inflation	26%	34%
Economy, unemployment	13%	24%
Dishonesty, corruption, moral decline, lack of religion, ethics	12%	3%
Dissatisfaction with government	11%	3%
High taxes	11%	*
Lack of funds	7%	*
Energy	*	6%
International, foreign policy	*	6%
Crime and lawlessness	*	5%
No response	47%	5%

Although lack of state funds, then, is not perceived as a major problem, education is highly regarded by Arkansans and is perceived as a potential recipient of increased spending.

In response to an open-ended question — "If the state had a $200 million increase in revenues, for what should it be spent?" — 25

persons of those responding felt it should be spent on education, 36 persons said it should be spent on highways and roads, and 19 persons felt it should be spent on a variety of social services such as welfare and care for the elderly. Only 2 persons said it should be spent on salaries for teachers, an issue which had received a great deal of attention in the few months preceding the survey.

When the respondents were given a choice that required them to choose between spending the money on one of two services, education was picked more frequently in every case. It should be noted that education, both kindergarten and university, did slightly less well when the other choice was police support and that the respondents were almost evenly divided between kindergarten and university when asked to decide between these two educational programs.

TABLE 3

WHICH EDUCATION SERVICES SHOULD BE SPENT

University (55%)	or Police (39%)
University (80%)	or Prison (20%)
Kindergarten (70%)	or Prison (25%)
Kindergarten (90%)	or Police (8%)
Kindergarten (55%)	or University (40%)
Police (60%)	or Prison (35%)

When the respondents were asked to specify the greatest need in general education, more than one-third (36 persons) said that education needs more qualified teachers, and 22 persons felt more basic courses such as reading were needed.

When asked to assign a letter grade to the public schools, Ankeny rated their schools higher than did citizens in the fifty states taken as a whole. The national sample in the table below comes from a Gallup poll of 1978.

TABLE 9

INDIVIDUAL AND NATIONAL GRADES ON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

GRADE	INDIVIDUAL	NATIONAL SCHOOL SYSTEM (NUMBER)
A	1901	95
B	1951	271
C	1951	1911
D	95	1171
F	55	95

Overall, the Tellurose sample gave the public schools of the state an average grade of about C + (2.52 on a scale of 4.0).

II

Attitudes on Higher Education

Evaluation of state college and university job performance

The people of Arkansas seemed convinced that a college education is necessary. Over three-fourths of the respondents said that a college education was either "very necessary" or "necessary" in today's world. When asked what are the greatest problems facing colleges today, respondents identified three main issues: the need for more money (37 percent); problems with drugs, morals, sex, and alcohol (19 percent); and the existence of poor or unqualified teachers (13 percent). These problems did not seem to dampen the respondents' positive attitudes toward Arkansas colleges and universities; however, since slightly over half (55 percent) felt that colleges were doing an excellent or a good job and only 8 percent felt they were doing a poor job.

When asked how colleges could be improved in the state, slightly over one-fourth of the respondents indicated that colleges could do a better job if they had better teachers. Higher academic standards (18 percent) and programs relevant to jobs (16 percent) were the next most frequently mentioned improvements.

Two questions in the survey, one rating state colleges and one rating public schools, allow for comparison. State colleges and universities were rated slightly higher than state public schools. The average grade given in the survey to state colleges and universities was 2.77 on a four-point scale; state public schools were given an average grade of 2.52. Only 1 percent indicated that they felt the state colleges were a failure, and 65 percent graded state colleges either A or B.

TABLE 5

COMPARISON OF GRADINGS OF STATE COLLEGES & PUBLIC SCHOOLS

GRADE	COLLEGES	PUBLIC SCHOOLS
A	18%	18%
B	47%	35%
C	30%	34%
D	3%	9%
F	1%	5%

Evaluation of services and programs

When asked to comment on services and programs of state colleges, the respondents mentioned a variety of areas and courses that should be added or strengthened. The additions most frequently mentioned were career and applied in nature: 21 percent felt more job training should be provided, 15 percent wanted more technical programs, and 14 percent wanted more math and computer science classes. This career interest is reflected in another question in the survey: 90 percent wanted more, rather than the same or less, career emphasis in college or university programs.

While suggestions for change in college programs varied widely, and while a strong career and applied emphasis is evident, it should also be noted that over half of those interviewed (55 percent) could think of no specific programs or courses of study that should be added to the curriculum of the state colleges. Although this may be an indication of satisfaction with state college programs, it could, on the other hand, indicate lack of interest in, or knowledge of, state colleges or college in general.

A similar ambiguity was also reflected in response to a question relating to changes that might be made in class scheduling to make attendance more convenient. Seventy-seven percent of those interviewed could think of no changes that would help them. Of those who did mention possible changes, 64 percent wanted more night classes, and 25 percent wanted classes closer to where they lived.

Most people felt that "very definitely" or "probably" universities should be involved in (1) providing practical experience to students; (2) educating those over twenty-one who had not been to college; (3) engaging in practical-research; and (4) providing remedial education. The remedial program was the least popular among these, and, again, the strong emphasis on career and applied learning is seen, with 96 percent indicating that "probably" or "very definitely" practical experience should be provided.

TABLE 6

RESPONSES TO "A COLLEGE SHOULD PROVIDE...":

	VERY DEF.	PROBABLY	PROBABLY NOT	DEF. NOT
Practical experience	74.7%	21.3%	2.1%	1.9%
Education for those over 21	65.4%	29.4%	3.0%	2.2%
Practical research for government & business	44.7%	40.2%	8.5%	6.6%
Remedial education	44.4%	30.8%	13.4%	11.3%

College and university costs, funding, and admissions

Two questions in the survey related to costs and funding of state colleges and universities. Fifty-five percent of those expressing an opinion on the question of cost felt that college tuition was too high; only 4 percent felt it was too low. On the issue of using state money for private colleges, 48 percent of those expressing an opinion felt it was a good idea, and 52 percent felt it was a bad idea. On both questions, 17 percent had no opinion.

A similar question regarding state money for private colleges was asked in 1976 of a sample of Alabama residents. There, only 17 percent felt that it was a good idea, and 44 percent rejected the idea of using state tax money for private colleges. Thirty-nine percent of those surveyed had no opinion or could not decide. It seems that more Arkansans than Alabamans have considered the issue and are favorably inclined toward the use of state taxes to support private schools.

On the issue of quality of education for those now attending college versus expanded opportunity to attend college, 61 percent of the respondents chose expanding opportunities so that more students could attend college while 39 percent wished to improve the educational quality available to those now attending college. These responses seem consistent with replies to the earlier question regarding the necessity of a college education.

In addition, slightly more than one-half (54 percent) were willing to pay higher taxes in order to have both quality education for those now attending college and expanded opportunity to attend college. Almost two-thirds (65 percent) of those responding felt that every high school graduate in Arkansas should be eligible to attend college; one-third felt that only the better students (the top 50 percent of high school graduates) should be admitted to college.

It seems clear that Arkansans think a college education is important and that the opportunities to attend college should be expanded. More than half felt that college tuition was too high, but, more importantly, more than half of the sample indicated a willingness to pay increased taxes to ensure both quality education and expanded opportunities to attend college.

College teachers and students

Two questions related to the public's attitude toward college teachers. In response to one of these, well over half of the respondents (61 percent) felt that college teachers are doing a good or an excellent job; in another reply, 85 percent said that college teachers' jobs were "very hard" or "fairly hard."

More than half of the repondents indicated that they thought college students work "very hard" or "hard." It seems, however, that the public believes that college teachers work harder than college students do.

TABLE 7

COMPARISON OF DIFFICULTY OF COLLEGE TEACHING WITH AMOUNT OF WORK COLLEGE STUDENTS GIVE TO THEIR STUDIES

	College Teachers' Jobs	College Students' Work
Very hard	39%	9%
Fairly hard	46%	49%
Fairly easy	13%	33%
Very easy	3%	9%

Comparison of state colleges

Respondents were asked what they believed to be the two or three best colleges in Arkansas. Among first choices, the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville was mentioned most frequently (57 percent of the time) and was mentioned as one of the two or three top universities in the state by 89 percent of the respondents.

TABLE 8

PERCENT INDICATING BEST TWO OR THREE COLLEGES IN ARKANSAS

	PERCENT MENTIONED AS 1ST CHOICE	PERCENT MENTIONED AS 2ND CHOICE	PERCENT MENTIONED AS 3RD CHOICE	PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS MENTIONING THE COLLEGE
UAF	57	18	14	89
ASU	9	18	21	48
UALR	8	16	10	34
UCA	4	14	11	28
Hendrix	8	7	9	24
Ouachita	3	5	12	20
Henderson	3	6	6	15
Ark. Tech	3	4	4	11
UAPB	3	3	2	8
UAM	1	4	3	8
Harding	2	2	4	8
SAU	0	2	1	3
Ark. College	0	1	2	3
Ozarks	0	1	2	3

Clearly, UAF is seen as the best university in Arkansas, followed at some distance by ASU, UALR, UCA, Hendrix, and Ouachita.

The respondents were also asked to give their general image of several specified colleges and universities in the state. One-third of the sample was asked to describe their general image of Hendrix, a different third was asked about Arkansas College, and the final third of the sample was asked about Ouachita. All respondents were asked about their image of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

Of those responding to the Hendrix question, 66 percent used terms like "excellent," "good," "top," "academic," and "intelligent." Fifteen percent noted that it was small, and 9 percent mentioned that it was church-affiliated.

Among those asked to comment on Ouachita, almost half (48 percent) noted that Ouachita was affiliated with the Baptist Church, and 40 percent indicated that they believed it to be a good school.

The image of Arkansas College was less focussed on one or two concepts than were the images of Hendrix and Ouachita; 33 percent noted that it was small, 12 percent that it was in Batesville or Northern Arkansas, and 10 percent mentioned that it was conservative.

The two most frequently cited attributes of UALR were that it was a good school (47 percent) and that it was growing (11 percent).

Sixty-one percent said that for what they wanted for themselves or their children, or think college students should be getting, UALR was doing a good job, and 12 percent felt it was doing an excellent job.

III

Demographic and Geographic Variations in Responses

Response differences by race

When asked to identify the greatest problems facing state government, whites most frequently cited inflation and high prices (25 percent), taxes (13 percent), and lack of honesty (13 percent). Blacks cited inflation and high prices (31 percent) and unemployment (31 percent) as most important. Only 4 percent of the whites interviewed named unemployment and 4 percent of the blacks named taxes. It should also be noted that over two-thirds of the black respondents mentioned the economic combination of inflation/high prices, general economy, and unemployment while only 36 percent of the whites expressed concern over this group of economic problems. There is a less than 0.1 percent probability that these differences between responses of whites and blacks are due to chance.

TABLE 9

PERCENTAGE INDICATING GREATEST PROBLEMS FACING STATE GOVERNMENT, BY RACE

PROBLEMS	WHITE	BLACK	
Inflation/high prices	24.6	31.1	
Taxes	12.4	4.4	
Economy	6.6	6.7	
Unemployment	4.4	31.1	
Dishonesty, corruption	12.5	11.1	
Lack of funds	7.4	2.2	
Politicians	11.0	11.1	
Miscellaneous	21.0	2.2	
Total number of respondents	(272)	(45)	(317)

$\chi^2 = 45.401$
p is less than .001 or 0.1% that differences are due to chance.

Regarding the question of how the state should spend a $20 million surplus, 40 percent of the whites interviewed said it should be spent on roads and highways while only 8 percent of the blacks mentioned this area of spending. Twenty-one percent of the blacks wished to spend the money on jobs and unemployment while only 3 percent of the whites chose this category. In addition, twice as many

blacks (36.4 percent) as whites (15.6 percent) mentioned social service programs as an area for more funding.

TABLE 10

PERCENTAGE INDICATING HOW STATE SURPLUS SHOULD BE SPENT, BY RACE

WHERE MONEY SHOULD BE SPENT	WHITE	BLACK	
Education	27.9	16.7	
Roads & highways	40.2	7.6	
Social service programs	15.6	36.4	
Jobs, unemployment	3.3	21.2	
Salaries for teachers	2.3	1.5	
Health, medical care	2.8	0.0	
Housing	1.8	10.7	
Misc.	6.3	6.1	
Total number	(598)	(66)	(464)

$x^2 = 45.401$
p is less than .001 or .1%

It is not surprising that black respondents and white respondents should indicate important differences of opinion regarding the way state money should be spent. In part, these differences reflect the differing positions occupied by the two groups in the state's economy. The emphasis of blacks was on state spending for jobs, unemployment, social services programs, and housing. These may be seen as programs which provide direct services. The greater emphasis of whites on such areas as road and highway improvements and education suggests that whites perceive the state as a facilitator rather than as a provider of direct sevices.

On the other hand, blacks were much more likely than whites to believe that a college education is necessary in today's world. Thirty-eight percent of the blacks said a college education was "very necessary"; only 19 percent of the whites felt it was "very necessary."

TABLE 11

PERCENTAGE INDICATING NECESSITY OF COLLEGE EDUCATION, BY RACE

NECESSITY OF COLLEGE	WHITE	BLACK	
Very necessary	18.9	38.3	
Necessary	56.5	49.4	
Unnecessary	23.3	9.9	
Very unnecessary	1.2	2.5	
Total	(497)	(81)	(578)

$x^2 = 19.597$
p is less than .001 or .1%

Given the belief of most blacks surveyed that a college education is a necessity and recognizing the economic status of blacks vis-a-vis that of whites, it is not surprising that more blacks than whites felt that college tuition was too high.

TABLE 12

COLLEGE TUITION COSTS, BY RACE

COSTS	WHITE	BLACK	
Too high	54.2%	61.1%	
About right	42.5%	30.6%	
Too low	3.3%	8.3%	
Total	(424)	(72)	(496)

$x^2 = 6.529$
p is less than .05 or 5%

Blacks were also more likely than whites (71 percent to 52 percent) to indicate that colleges are doing an excellent or a good job. In addition, blacks graded the public schools somewhat higher than whites; the average of grades chosen by blacks was 2.74, that of whites 2.50, on a 4.0 system.

Table 13

Rating the Performance of Colleges, by Race

Job	Whites	Blacks	
Excellent	6.4%	20.5%	
Good	83.8%	50.6%	
Fair	38.8%	24.1%	
Poor	9.0%	5.1%	
Total	(456)	(79)	(535)

$\chi^2 = 21.027$
p is less than .001 or 1%

When responses of blacks and whites on the choice of the best two or three schools in the state are compared, some interesting similarities and differences may be noted: (1) both groups chose UAF most frequently as their first choice; (2) almost twice as many whites as blacks chose UAF; (3) among whites no college or university except UAF was mentioned as a first choice by more than 10 percent of the respondents while among blacks, UAF, UALR, and UAPB were mentioned as first choices by at least 15 percent of the sample; (4) only 1 percent of the whites mentioned UAPB as being among the top three schools, while 47 percent of the blacks included it; (5) blacks did not mention Harding College, Arkansas College, or College of the Ozarks at all.

Table 14

Percentage Indicating Have Two or Three Colleges in Arkansas, by Race

	Whites				Blacks			
	Percentage nominated as 1st choice	Percentage nominated as 2nd choice	Percentage nominated as 3rd choice	Percentage of respondents nominating the college	Percentage nominated as 1st choice	Percentage nominated as 2nd choice	Percentage nominated as 3rd choice	Percentage of respondents nominating the college
UAF	60	17	14	91	35	28	7	70
SAU	9	16	22	69	8	16	13	36
UALR	6	17	10	59	25	11	9	45
UCA	5	14	10	27	6	11	17	34
Hendrix	9	9	10	27	*	*	6	6
Ouachita	5	5	11	19	0	5	17	20
Henderson	5	6	6	15	2	8	9	17
Ark. Tech	5	5	4	12	2	0	4	6
Harding	2	5	5	10	0	0	0	0
UAM	*	5	4	7	4	8	0	12
SAU	*	5	*	5	0	0	4	4
College of Ozarks	*	1	2	3	0	0	0	0
Arkansas College	*	*	2	2	0	0	0	0
UAPB	*	1	*	1	14	16	13	47

[illegible]

We may conclude from this comparison of school rankings by blacks and whites that UAF is seen by both groups as an excellent school. However, whites seem to view it much more favorably than blacks do. Also, there does not seem to be as strong an agreement among blacks as to which college or university is the best. In addition, the traditionally black UAPB is not viewed by whites as among the best, nor are Harding, Arkansas College, or College of the Ozarks viewed by blacks as outstanding schools. Finally, it is interesting to note the way blacks rated Hendrix as compared to Ouachita. Both are church-related schools and are similar in program; however,

only 4 percent of the blacks mentioned Hendrix while 29 percent placed Ouachita in the top two or three schools.

Generally it may be said that blacks were more likely than whites to see economic issues as of greatest importance, more interested than whites in direct service spending by the state (jobs, social services programs, etc.), but many favorable than whites in attitudes toward higher education in the state.

Response differences by sex

Women were more likely than men to emphasize the necessity of a college education. Eighty-two percent of the women interviewed said a college education was "necessary" or "very necessary" compared to 71 percent of the men.

TABLE 15

PERCENTAGE INDICATING NECESSITY OF COLLEGE EDUCATION, BY SEX

	Sex		
NECESSITY OF COLLEGE	MALES	FEMALES	
Very Necessary	19.7	22.9	
Necessary	51.1	59.6	
Unnecessary	26.2	16.5	
Very Unnecessary	3.1	0.9	
Total	(229)	(330)	(179)

χ^2 = 13.766
p is less than .01 or 1%

A majority (61 percent) of the women felt that college tuition was too high while fewer than half (47 percent) of the men expressed this view.

TABLE 16

COLLEGE TUITION COSTS, BY SEX

	Sex		
Costs	Whites	Females	
Too high	46.9	49.7	
About right	47.9	38.0	
Too low	5.2	5.3	
Total	(459)	(490)	(479)

$\chi^2 = 4.078$
p is less than .001 at .05

Women, like blacks, tended to place more emphasis on education and to believe that its costs are too high. As in the case of blacks, this pattern may be consistent with minority status.

Response differences by geographic area

By noting the area of residence of those selecting a particular college or university as being among the top two or three, we can develop an indicator of that school's statewide reputation. For example, if of all the persons naming a particular school in the top two or three, 100 percent come from that school's county or from bordering counties, it can be assumed that the school is not well regarded outside its own geographic area. Conversely, if 80 or 90 percent of those placing a particular school in the top two or three come from outside the school's region, then we can assume a high level of statewide recognition. Column one in Table 17 below shows, of all those placing a particular school in the top two or three, the percentage who were from outside the school's immediate geographic area. If we select 75-100 percent as indicating significantly more statewide than regional recognition, we see that Ouachita, Henderson, UAF, UCA, Arkansas Tech, ASU, UAM, SAU, Harding, and UAPB score in this range. A score below 25 percent would indicate significantly high regional but low statewide recognition; no college scores in this range. Those schools ranking somewhat low on statewide recognition but well above the 25 percent level include Hendrix, Arkansas College, and UALR.

Table 17

Statewide Recognition and Academic Respect at Home

	Level of Statewide Outside Support	Level of Academic Respect at Home
Ouachita	98%	10%
Henderson	99%	29%
U AR	99%	95%
UCA	99%	25%
Ark. Tech	96%	29%
SAU	95%	27%
Harding	81%	21%
SSU	79%	60%
UAM	76%	36%
UAPB	75%	59%
Col. of Ozarks	71%	19%
UALR	61%	40%
Ark. College	58%	19%
Hendrix	57%	36%

Further, by noting the percent of respondents from within the school's geographic area who named the school as being in the top two or three, we may get some indication of the school's level of academic respect within its own geographic region. For example, if all respondents from a school's region (100 percent) mentioned the school as in the top two or three, we may see that the school is doing a good job of generating academic respect at home. Column two in Table 17 above indicates the percentage of those in each school's geographic area who named that school as one of the best.

Again, if we use 75-100 percent as indicative of high respect at home, we see that only one school (UAF, 95 percent) ranks at this high level. UAF is followed at some distance by ASU, UALR, and Hendrix. If a score below 25 percent is taken to indicate a low level of academic respect at home, UCA, Ouachita, Henderson, UAPB, UAM, Harding, and Southern Arkansas University fall into this group.

Using both measures, it can be assumed that the school which scores very high on the "outside support" scale (indicating a good statewide reputation) and very high on the academic respect scale (indicating strong academic respect in its geographic area) must be the most respected school in the state. Only one school, UAF, fits this scoring pattern.

A second pattern of scoring which may be noted is that of the schools which scored high on the statewide-recognition scale but low on the academic-respect-at-home scale. Schools that score in this pattern may be thought of as specialty schools. That is, the school has built an academic reputation through some special interest groups in the state and either has not tried or has failed to serve its surrounding geographic area or to win academic respect in its immediate region. UCA, Harding, UAPB, Ouachita, and Henderson fall into this group.

Summary

How well are Arkansas colleges and universities doing their job? Arkansans seem convinced that their colleges and universities are doing a good job. There is no evidence of widespread dissatisfaction with state colleges and universities and a good deal of evidence of satisfaction. Over half of those responding believed that state colleges and universities were doing a good or an excellent job while only 8 percent believed that colleges were doing a poor job. This positive attitude toward the job state colleges are doing is also seen in the public's evaluation of college teachers. Well over half believed that teachers were doing a good or an excellent job, and over four-fifths believed that college teaching was fairly hard or very hard.

What is the job or mission of Arkansas colleges? The results of this survey suggest that the mission of state colleges should be multidimensional. There was strong support for educational programs for the nontraditional older student; for the inclusion of practical experience in the academic learning experience; for practical or applied research conducted for government and business; and for remedial educational programs for those who may seek admission to college with academic deficiencies.

What changes could improve Arkansas colleges? A sizeable minority suggested the traditional route to academic improvement: higher academic standards and better teachers. However, the strongest and clearest response for change came in the area of applied or career-oriented programs. Ninety percent wanted more career emphasis in the college curriculum.

At what level should tuition be set? Arkansans seem to feel that a college education is a necessity and that colleges should be open to every high school graduate in the state. Thus it is not surprising that most respondents felt that current tuition levels were too high. This opinion was especially marked in minority respondents — blacks and women.

Will the public support an increase in state taxes to improve educational quality and expand educational opportunities? The strength of support for increased taxes is not altogether clear since almost one-fifth had no opinion or could not make up their minds on this issue. However, a majority (54 percent) did indicate that they are willing to pay higher taxes in order to improve the quality of higher education and expand the opportunity structure so that

more students might attend college. This figure, along with our other findings, shows that, overall, attitudes toward higher education in the state of Arkansas are remarkably positive.

APPENDIX

HIGHER EDUCATION SURVEY

Center for Urban and Governmental Affairs
Dr. Robert Johnston
Dr. Doug Buffalo

University of Arkansas at Little Rock

May 1978

Good evening (afternoon) Sir (Ma'am). This is a public opinion poll in which we'd like to ask a member of your household a few questions. (Without waiting for a response, ask:) How many persons 18 or older are at home now? (Draw vertical line) (If more than one, ask:) How many of these are male? (Draw horizontal line)

NUMBER OF ADULTS IN HOUSING UNIT VERSION 1

No. of men at home	1	2	3	4
0	Adult	Oldest Woman	Oldest Woman	Youngest Woman
1	Adult	Woman	Youngest Woman	Man
2		Youngest Man	Youngest Man	Youngest Woman
3			Oldest Man	Woman or Youngest Woman
4				Youngest Man

According to the sampling method, I have to ask a few questions of the (woman) (youngest man) (etc. from table) at home now. (If person on phone is correct sex:) "Would that be you?" (If not:) "Please call (him/her) to the phone."

(If a different person than answered:) "Good evening, Sir (Ma'am). This is a public opinion poll in which we'd like to ask you a few questions about state government. (To everyone) "Your answers, of course, are confidential." (Without waiting for a response, ask:)

1. "What is the greatest problem facing state government today?"

2. "If the state had an increase of $20 million in revenues, for what should it be spent?" _____

3. "If the choice were to spend an additional $20 million on prisons or kindergartens, which would you prefer?"
   1. Prisons 2. Kindergartens 9. n/a

4. "On kindergartens or universities?"
   1. Kindergartens 2. Universifies 9. n/a

5. "On universities or more police?" 1. Universities 2. More Police 9. n/a

6. "On more police or kindergartens?" 1. More Police 2. Kindergartens 9. n/a

7. "On prisons or police?" 1. Prisons 2. Police 9. n/a

8. "On prisons or universities?" 1. Prisons 2. Universities 9. n/a

9. "Overall, in **education,** what do you think is the greatest need?"

10. "Students are often given the grades A, B, C, D and fail to denote the quality of their work. Suppose the public schools themselves, in this community were graded the same way, what grade would you give the public schools here, A, B, C, D or Fail?" 1. A 2. B 3. C 4. D 5. Fail 9. n/a

11. "Would you say a **college** education was very necessary, necessary, unnecessary, very unnecessary in today's world?" 1. very necessary 2. necessary 3. unnecessary 4. very unnecessary 9. n/a

12. "What do you think is the greatest problem facing our **colleges** today?"

    _____

13. "Do you think the colleges are doing an excellent, good, fair, or poor job?"
    1. Excellent 2. Good 3. Fair 4. Poor

14. "How do you think the colleges could do a better job?" _____

15. "What grade would you give the state's colleges: A, B, C, D, or Fail?" 1. A 2. B 3. C 4. D 5. Fail 9. n/a

16. "What areas of study or types of courses do you think should be increased at our colleges?"

17. "Do you think the college curriculum should give more or less emphasis to careers and career preparation?"
1. More 2 Less 3 about same (if volunteered) 9. n/a

18. "Is college tuition too high, about right, or too low?" 1. Too high 2. about right 3. too low 9. n/a

19. "Is it a good or bad idea for state funds to be used for tuition scholarships to private colleges?" 1. Good 2. Bad 9. n/a

20. "What changes in time or location in scheduling of college classes would make attending college more convenient for you or your family?"

"What are the best 2 or 3 colleges in Arkansas?" (Do **not** read choices)

		Hendrix	UA Fay	UALR	ASU	UCA	UAM	SAU	Hard.	UAPB	ArCol.	(list) Other	NA
21-22.	1st Choice	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	10	11		99
23-24.	2nd Choice	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	10	11		99
25-26.	3rd Choice	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	10	11		99

27. "Should every high school graduate in Arkansas be eligible to attend college or should only good students (top 50%) be admitted to college?" 1. Every 2. Top 50% 9. n/a

"People frequently have an image of specific colleges. How does the image of _____ differ from that of other colleges?" (Ask 1st respondent Hendrix, 2nd Ark. College, 3rd Ouachita, etc.)

		(probe for images)	
		Did not ask	NA
28.	"Hendrix College" _____	8	9
29.	"Arkansas College" _____	8	9
30.	"Ouachita University" _____	8	9
31.	"The University of Arkansas at Little Rock" _	8	9

Ask **All** respondents, UALR

32. "For what you would want from college (or would want for your children) (or think college students should be getting) would you say the University of Arkansas at Little Rock is excellent, good, fair, or poor?" 1. Excellent 2. Good 3. Fair 4. Poor 9. n/a

"Which of these things would you say a college should very definitely, probably, probably not, definitely not be doing:"

33. "Education for those over 21 who haven't had an opportunity for college?" 1. Very definitely 2. Probably 3. Probably not 4. Definitely not 9. n/a

34. "Practical experience which will help students find and do better in jobs?" 1. Very definitely 2. Probably 3. Probably not 4. Definitely not 9. n/a

35. "Remedial education for students who graduate from high school with deficiencies in reading, writing, and arithmetic?" 1. Very definitely 2. Probably 3. Probably not 4. Definitely not 9. n/a

36. "Practical research for business and government?" 1. Very definitely 2. Probably 3. Probably not 4. Definitely not 9. n/a

37. "Do you think college teachers do an excellent, good, fair, or poor job?" 1. Excellent 2. Good 3. Fair 4. Poor 9. n/a

38. "Do you think the job of a college teacher is very hard, fairly hard, fairly easy, or very easy?" 1. Very hard 2. Fairly hard 3. Fairly easy 4. Very easy 9. n/a

39. "Do you think most college students work at their studies very hard, fairly hard, fairly easy, or very easy?
1. Very hard 2 Fairly hard 3. Fairly easy 4. Very easy 9 n/a

40. "Which would you choose, 1. Improved Quality Education for those now attending college OR 2. expanded oportunity for more students to attend college?" 9. n/a

41. "In order to have both better quality for those going to colleges **and** opportunity for more students to go to college would you be willing to pay higher taxes or not willing?" 1. Yes, higher taxes 2. Not 9. n/a

42. "How far did you go in school?" 1. Less than 10th grade 2. Some HS 3. HS Grad 4. Some College 5. College Grad 6. Some Grad School 9. n/a

43-44. "In what year were you born?" 19____ 18____ (last 2 digits) 77 = No Answer

45. "Are you white or black?" 1. White 2. Black
"Thank you, you've been very helpful, good night."

46. (Sex of respondent) 1. Male 2. Female

47-48. Counties:

01. Ark	08. Car	15. Con	22. Drw	29. Hem	
02. Ash	09. Chi	16. Crai	23. Fau	30. Hot	
03. Bax	10. Cla	17. Craw	24. Fra	31. How	
04. Ben	11. Clay	18. Cri	25. Ful	32. Ind	
05. Boo	12. Cleb	19. Cro	26. Gar	33. Iza	
06. Bra	13. Cley	20. Dal	27. Gra	34. Jac	
07. Cal	14. Col	21. Des	28. Gre	35. Jef	
36. Joh	43. Lon	50. Nev	57. Pol	64. Sea	71. Van
37. Laf	44. Mad	51. New	58. Pop	65. Seb	72. Wash
38. Law	45. Mar	52. Oua	59. Pra	66. Sev	73. Whi
39. Lee	46. Mil	53. Per	60. Pul	67. Sha	74. Woo
40. Lin	47. Mis	54. Phi	61. Ran	68. StF	75. Yel
41. Lit	48. Montr	55. Pik	62. Sal	69. Sto	
42. Log	49. Mont	56. Poi	63. Sco	70. Uni	

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